

*Re: Israel, 1948, etc.  
Hajj Amin*

## ARABS WANT BELT ENCIRCLING ISRAEL

### BUTTA AND OTHER LEADERS THEIR VIEWS ON RESETTLING OF PALESTINE REFUGEES.

By ALFRED ROSEN  
Contributed to The New York Times  
BEIRUT, Lebanon, Sept. 16  
The Arab Higher Committee, Grand Mufti Hajj Amin, and his Arab Higher Committee have started a move to create a solid belt of Palestine Arab settlements around Israel and prevent the moving of refugees away from Israeli borders.

This change of front has come with the present evident collapse of the former resistance by the Arab League, the Arab Higher Committee and the Arab governments on the return of Palestinian Arab refugees to their original homes under the terms of a 1949 United Nations resolution.

The Arab Higher Committee was the last to demand that the refugees must return to the territory now under Israeli control. This demand not only has been abandoned for practical, as opposed to political, purposes but the Arab Higher Committee and certain Arab statesmen now are opposed to any return of Palestine Arabs to Israeli territory. This change has been brought about by the fact that Israel will accept only a few Arabs into their old home and that it is better to avoid the situation that the Palestine camp

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been settled by agreement for a few return.

Apparently the United Nations Relief and Works Agency difficulty in getting Grand Mufti Hajj Amin to fulfill his promise to make a public declaration in favor of the resettlement of Palestinian Arab refugees was concerned with where refugees are to be settled rather than with the issue of repatriation itself. Strangely nationalist elements apparently are reducing it around the Grand Mufti and the Arab Higher Committee's program for a belt of thickly-settled Palestinians surrounding Israel.

Their dispute with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency now is concerning with the program for moving the mass of refugees to northern Syria, notably the distant but fertile Djebel area in northwestern Syria beyond the desert. The United Nations agency desires a declaration from the Grand Mufti favoring resettlement without specification that refugees must remain within the vicinity of Palestine. Both the Grand Mufti and the Arab Higher Committee have gained considerable prestige as a result of recent events in Jordan due to the widespread belief—founded or not—that the Grand Mufti and Arab Higher Committee have once more shown their strength. The United Nations organization has been forced to deal to a certain degree with the Arab Higher Committee and indirectly with the Grand Mufti because of the evidence of the Arab Higher Committee's strength among the refugees. Another fact guiding the United Nations agency is that the rivals to the Arab Higher Committee are the Communists who are insisting on the implementation of the 1947 United Nations partition resolution.

The Nationalists are vitally interested in agreements such as the former director general, Maj. Gen. Edward Kennedy, made shortly before he retired this summer with a large Syrian landholding and trading company. As reported here,

approximately 1,000 refugees families were to be moved to 200 plots of land, part of very large holdings of the company, housing was to be provided and each was to receive the ownership of a plot of land. The United Nations would provide the essential facilities, machinery, seed and support until the families became self-supporting.

At present a further scheme to settle some 3,000 refugees just east of Beirut is in the final stages of negotiation. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency would provide rations for a certain period and certain facilities but could not enter directly into an agreement.

In Jordan, 100,000 acres have been offered by landowners. The identity of this area is being investigated. The progress of the relief and works agency calls for the purchasing of land by the government with a grant from the relief agency and the settlement of refugees who would have a purchase right.

An aim of settlers by the government, cooperative societies, firms and other organizations with grants and aid from the relief and works agency is rendering the program as direct as possible through the agency. There is a possibility that the Grand Mufti and the Arab Higher Committee themselves may seek roles as mothers of refugees, but as soon as possible to the Israel borders.

The shift to the Grand Mufti's policy was apparently connected with the anti-American which Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria displayed for the preservation of the independent Kingdom of Jordan, and their strong opposition to its normalization with Iraq. The Palestinian element is becoming increasingly predominant in Jordan in which it constitutes not only one two-thirds of the population but is an educated and trained element that is pushing the original Jordanians, majority of Bedouin stock, into the

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